

Hillary Carrillo

Mrs. Chesley

English II H Pd. 6

20 August 2015

### 2,081 Miles for the American Dream

When my parents had their sons, they instantaneously knew that they wanted their boys to live a better life and have more worthy childhood memories than they did. What they wanted to achieve was the American Dream. After years of hard work and determination, my parents moved to Nebraska and settled down in a small town. Eventually they had me, born a United States citizen. As Julian Castro put it, “The American Dream is not a sprint, or even a marathon, but a relay. Our families don’t always cross the finish line in the span of one generation.” These words are precise and appertain to my family. Being Hispanic has significance to me because without my roots, I would not be who I am. I appreciate and embrace my culture, which is why my family’s story of happiness, love and distress is one of eleven million others.

Castro’s quotation, “But each generation passes on to the next the fruits of their labor,” essentially applies to my parents. My grandmas and grandpas, from both sides of the family, never had to travel for the American dream because they carved out their dreams in Guatemala. However, my parents wanted a less harsh life for their children, something they never experienced in their childhood. They wanted to live the American Dream in the United States. In order to do so, they would have to travel 2,081 miles through many obstacles. To me, Castro’s words mean we should never give up, even during our hardships. That may very well be a cliché, but I wholeheartedly think that if we have motivation, positivity and we work hard, we can achieve our own American Dream.

Many Hispanics immigrate to the United States to make a better life for themselves. A majority of people who come want to rise from poverty and have a “rags to riches” story for their family. Knowing my family went through these obstacles made me question my family roots and gave me the drive to do some research on my heritage. My mother came to this country before my father did and worked as a maid in Beverly Hills. After my father came, they moved to a small town in Nebraska to follow in the footsteps of my uncle. Once in Lexington and their own home, my two older brothers came to join them, eleven and the other seven. Upon coming to the U.S, they told me how they struggled to learn English. After graduating high school, they went off to college. Juanjo, the middle sibling, has a degree in Public Relations and now works in New York City. My older brother, Erick, is still in college earning his degree in Civil Engineering. Both paved their own dreams, and I am positive there are many more to come.

Castro’s quotation, although I recently heard it for the first time, has influenced me. It made me communicate with my parents about their experiences. Some of the stories they told me were melancholy, but there were lots of joyful ones too. Upon hearing these stories, I embrace my heritage and want to research my Guatemalan roots, and I am appreciative of my parents. I would not be here if my parents had not followed their American dream. The United States with its wealth of diversity is like a big salad bowl. However, I am appreciative of the diversity. Latino culture is interesting and intriguing. From traditions to food, different Latino cultures have many things in common. My family agrees on Castro’s quotation, and they are happy they made their mark in Lexington, Nebraska.

What my parents wanted to achieve when they moved to United States was the American Dream. With years of hard work and determination my parents were able to achieve their wish. I am proud of being Guatemalan and I appreciate and embrace my culture. I do not

shy away from my roots. Julian Castro's quotation relates to my parents as well as eleven million others. Although Hispanic Heritage Month is a month of celebration for different cultures, I am happy to say that I celebrate my Hispanic culture every day in little ways.